NRO APPROVED FOR RELEASE
22 June 2015

S/AL - LETHompson:mac ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
(Drafting Office and Officer)

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

10851

Approved in S/AL 12/9/65

Memorandum of Conversation

DATE: Dec. 8, 1965

SUBJECT: Soviet Orbital Rockets

PARTICIPANTS: Ambassador Anatoliy F. Dobrynin, USSR

Llewellyn E. Thompson, Ambassador-at-Large
Department of State

COPIES TO:

S/S	White House	G/PM	
S/P	IO	Amembassy MOSCOW	
G	EUR	NOTE:	Complete distribution made in S/S-S:CMS on 12/10/65. Original to RS/R for filing. 12/10/65.
INR/OD	SCI		
CIA	ACDA		
S/AL (3)	DOD		

The Ambassador said he had been instructed to make the following remarks in reply to my statement to him on November 15, 1965, concerning the Soviet orbital rockets:

"The statement that the exhibition of Soviet orbital rockets allegedly contradicts the spirit of the General Assembly resolution of October 17, 1963, calling upon nations not to launch into orbit around the earth objects carrying nuclear weapons was received in Moscow with surprise. The same thing, in essence, was publicly reiterated by State Department representative McCloskey at a press conference November eighteenth. It is well known that this General Assembly resolution, of which the USSR was one of the sponsors, called upon states to refrain from launching into space objects bearing nuclear weapons, and not a word was said therein about banning the development, construction, production and acceptance of such types of weapons as equipment of armed forces.

"Moscow rejects the attempts to cast a shadow over the Soviet Union's conscientious fulfillment of the

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

I 28138/6 - 93

NRO APPROVED FOR RELEASE
22 June 2015

General Assembly resolution of October 17, 1963. The thought inevitably arises that the fuss raised in the American press about this question is clearly designed to distract the attention of world public opinion from the USA's military preparations in space, particularly from the program announced by the U.S. for the creation of a military, manned, orbital laboratory (MOL) which is designed to study methods of firing rockets from orbits as well as bombing for the purposes of aiding land, sea, air and cosmic armed forces. From the point of view you have set forth, the availability to the U.S. of the above-mentioned laboratory can be considered as a violation of the resolution.

"The Soviet Union regards the recommendations contained in the UN General Assembly resolution of October 17, 1963, as very important, strictly observes them, and will in the future undeviatingly comply with this resolution, on the understanding, of course, that other states will adhere to the same position."

I pointed out that what we had in fact suggested was that it would be helpful if the Soviets would make a public statement to the effect that they adhered to the resolution of the General Assembly on this subject. I inquired whether we could make use of the statement he was making to me today. The Ambassador replied that he had no instructions but he assumed that we could say that the Soviets had told us that they were upholding the Assembly resolution.

In this connection, the Ambassador remarked that he had been very careful in reporting our conversation and had said that we had no present intention of making a public statement, but that such might become necessary. He said that in fact Mr. McCloskey had made a public statement the next day, which had reached Moscow about the same time as his cable. He thought in cases of this kind that it would be better if we told them frankly what our intentions were.

I explained that the purpose of my remarks had been to warn him that we might be subjected to pressure to say something and that

NRO APPROVED FOR RELEASE
22 June 2015

this had in fact occurred the next day, although at the time I talked to him, we had hoped we could avoid saying anything until they had had an opportunity to reply.

The Ambassador merely observed that he thought we were too sensitive to pressure from the press on questions of this kind.